



CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
Office of the City Manager
Letter to Commission No. 0031-2005

To: Mayor David Dermer and
Members of the City Commission

Date: February 4, 2005

From: Jorge M. Gonzalez
City Manager

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jorge", written over the printed name.

Subject: WEEKLY UPDATE

The purpose of this LTC is to provide you with an update describing some of the areas the Administration has recently been focusing on:

Miami Beach Community Survey – Staff has been working with representatives from the City's contractor, the Hay Group, on the community survey that will solicit feedback on how to make Miami Beach an even better place to live, work, visit and play for all members of our community. An LTC with the final copy of the English and Spanish resident survey was sent on February 4. The resident survey phone calls are scheduled to begin this weekend and will be ongoing for the next couple of weeks. An LTC with a draft copy of the business and a draft copy of the civic organization surveys will be sent next week.

Leadership Florida - I attended the third session of Leadership Florida in Jacksonville from January 21-22. Leadership Florida brings together public and private sector leaders from throughout the state of Florida to continue building a network throughout the state to deal with issues of mutual concern that affect the public and private sectors. The focus of this session was on improving the quality of education throughout the state and included a presentation by Miami Dade County School Superintendent Rudy Crew.

Education Related Issues – While in Jacksonville, I had an opportunity to meet with School Superintendent Rudy Crew and discuss education related issues dealing specifically with the City of Miami Beach. In addition, Commissioner Bower and I have been meeting with State Representative Dan Gelber to continue our ongoing discussions regarding improving the quality of education in Miami Beach.

State Legislative Update – With the state legislative session scheduled to begin on March 7, staff has been working with our lobbyists following up on the various issues that were approved by the City Commission as part of our 2005 state legislative package. I plan to be in Tallahassee during the session attending the fourth session of Leadership Florida and will schedule meetings with staff to

follow up on some of these issues. In addition, I am planning on attending Miami Dade County Days on April 6-7 and hope that some of you are able to join me. City staff will work to schedule appropriate meetings for those of us attending Dade Days.

Major Events Plan (MEP) - Staff continues to plan and prepare for several major events that will be taking place on Miami Beach in the next couple of weeks including the Miami Beach Festival of the Arts from February 12-13; Volley Palooza2005 from February 3-14; the Miami International Boat Show from February 17-21; the Yacht & Brokerage Show from February 17-21; and the South Beach Wine and Food Festival from February 25-27. An LTC with additional details regarding the Boat show was sent on February 3.

Film & Print – Several productions continue to take place throughout the City, including the independent feature "Retirement" starring Jack Warden, the late Ossie Davis, George Segal and Rip Torn. The film version of "Miami Vice" movie, directed by Michael Mann and starring Jamie Foxx and Colin Ferrell, is still scheduled to begin filming throughout the City in May 2005. An LTC was sent on January 20 providing greater details about the outlook of the film and print industry in Miami Beach this upcoming year. In addition, the Miami International Film Festival is scheduled to beginning this weekend with many events and film showings taking place in Miami Beach. An LTC with details regarding the Film Festival was sent on January 28.

Public Safety – The Fire Department was presented with a Life Safety Achievement Award for the year 2003 by the Residential Fire Safety Institute. This award recognizes the local fire prevention activities that contributed in reducing the number of lives lost in residential fires. The Fire Department qualified for this award in 2003 because it recorded zero fire deaths in structures that year. In addition, the groundbreaking was held for construction on Fire Station 2 which will result in improvements that include the full historic renovation of the existing building and construction of a new facility that will include three apparatus bays and living quarters for fire crews as well as an Emergency Operations Center. Forty members of the Miami Beach Police Department provided security and crowd control for the Presidential Inauguration in Washington D.C. on January 20. Two new police officers were sworn in on January 27. On February 4, representatives from the Police Department attended a Miami Dade County Community Relations Board meeting to continue discussing police policies throughout the County that pertain to the appropriate use of tasers.

Organizational Development – All Department Directors and members of my Executive staff attended a two day leadership retreat that focused on performance improvement, performance measurement and strategic planning. The Office of Budget and Performance Improvement will work with all City Departments to continue the work started at this retreat. The City Clerk will be

working with each of your offices to identify a date in April for the Commission's second annual leadership retreat.

Service Excellence initiative – In our ongoing efforts to provide the best possible customer service, the City's Customer Service Team, comprised of representatives from throughout the Administration, spent several months working with staff from throughout the organization on updating our customer service standards. A City wide event was held on January 24 to unveil the new standards and training will take place over the next several weeks to ensure that all City staff are trained on these new approaches that promote providing the best possible customer service. Part of our campaign includes posting the standards in visible areas in all City Departments, including the Office of the Mayor and Commission, so that all staff, as well as our customers, are aware of what our customers have a right to expect.

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) – The Surety Company for the defaulted contractor on the Normandy Park and Pool Project has informed the City that they intend to honor their Performance Bond in its entirety and will be hiring a contractor to complete the pool facility according to the City's specifications. The City is currently pricing the park portion of the work with the intent to award this work separately to a JOC contractor. Staff from CIP met with interested residents in late January regarding closeout issues associated with the 42nd Street Streetscape, including parking related issues. The ribbon cutting for the Victory Garden and artistic fence will be held Thursday, February 17 at 10:30 a.m. with the memorial plaque for Joe Villari to be dedicated at that time.

Parks & Recreation - The Parks & Recreation Department will begin a new program, "Movies in the Park" on February 25. An LTC with additional details will be sent shortly. In addition, the Department will be hosting its first "Kids Come First" town meeting at the North Shore Park Youth Center on February 17 from 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. The overall purpose of the program is to tap the collective wisdom of the City's public and private organizations to gain comments and insights about our current programs as well as new ones that will address the interest and needs of youth in K-12th grade. Specific goals of the session are to open channels of communication among groups we serve, to establish working partnerships with the various organizations, to increase understand of and participation in the scholarship program and to discuss improvement opportunities for the full range of Parks & Recreation Department programmatic offerings.

2620 Biarritz Drive - Auction of City-owned property located at 2620 Biarritz Drive will occur on site at the property on February 18 at 3:00 p.m. Last appraisal estimated the market value at \$1,025,000. The property will be sold to the highest bidder in its "as is, where is" condition, subject to final approval by the Mayor and City Commission as to price.

1833 Bay Road - Closing on the City's purchase of the property located at 1833 Bay Road from the Gloria Rosenthal Trust was concluded on Monday January 31 at 2:00 p.m. for a sales price of approximately \$1,080,000, plus \$30,000 (pro-rata share of broker commission) and approximately \$6,800 in closing costs (settlement, title insurance, endorsements, etc).

Homeless Census - The Homeless Census, conducted last week, resulted in an 8% reduction in homeless in our City since April 2004 and reflects a 38% reduction in the homeless population in less than 2 years (from 384 in April 2003 to 304 in November 2003 to 259 in April 2004 to 239 in January 2005). The county-wide Census included Office of Community Services staff, Miami Beach Police, Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust officials and community volunteers. The count took place beginning at 10:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 27 and ended at 4:30 a.m. on Friday, January 28.

Venetian Island - Staff and I met with Matt Liebowitz, Linda Grosz and representatives from FP&L to discuss various streetscape and right-of-way issues in and around the Venetian Island.

Beach Concessions - Staff and I toured the beach concession areas from Pier Park near Penrod's north along the beach to 73rd Street to prepare for meetings next week with representatives from Penrod's and with representatives from the Boucher Brothers to finalize the negotiations of the Boucher amendments to the existing agreement.

Black History Month - An employee led committee has been working on plans for this year's Black History Month celebrations. A proclamation will be presented at the February 23 City Commission meeting with the employee event scheduled for February 24.

City's 90th Birthday Celebration - Staff is working on several initiatives to celebrate the City's 90th Birthday, which takes place on Saturday, March 26. If you have any ideas that you would like to share regarding the City's birthday celebrations, please feel free to let me know.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Electronic Copy: Management Team

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